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TEXAN TAKES

OVER C.I.A.

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ADMIRAL William Raborn, from tiny wartime beginnings, whom President Johnson has picked as the new head of the Central Intelligence Agency—America's world-wide spy system—is a bluff, hearty back-slapping type, known in Pentagon circles as "Mr. Polaris," STEPHEN BARBER cables from Washington.

As Director of Special Projects with the Bureau of Naval Ordnance, he took over the nuclear submarine missile development project in 1957 and rammed it through to its successful completion.

His detractors say plenty of other officers could have done as well, given the technical expertise of nuclear specialists like Admiral Hyman Rickover, "father of the atomic submarine," on his team, not to mention the best talents firms like Lockheed, General Electric and Aerojet-General, all giants in their fields, could provide.

The fact remains Raborn did it. And what was more, it came at a time when a good many wildly extravagant defence programmes were running into serious trouble.

When Mr. Robert McNamara took over at the Pentagon as the late President Kennedy's Defence Secretary in 1961 he was appalled at the mess he found.

One after another schemes for futuristic weapons systems like the nuclear aeroplane, several different families of rockets and supersonic bombers, were axed—among them the air force's Skybolt. But Polaris was a winner.

The cost-accountant from the Ford motor company had found a sailor after his own heart. Admiral Raborn might not have had too much sea-time. His wartime service had included few whiffs of grapeshot—but he is, with all his blarney, a go-getter executive.

No shrinking violet where he sees publicity as a means of securing his ends—which may no longer apply in his new appointment—Admiral Raborn is the kind who impresses Congressmen.

He had the knack of handling those crucial committees on Capitol Hill which are the taxpayers' watchdogs on defence spending. And he had a good line to shoot.

Some say Raborn deliberately overinflated estimates so as to make a fine show of effecting economies later. The fact remains that under his team leadership the Polaris's many teething problems were licked three years before the deadline.

But, great as that task was, it seems child's play compared with the burden that has now been heaped upon him. The organisation he will control has grown

Its disasters—like Gary Powers's U2 flight over Russia just before the Paris summit of May 1960—are better remembered than its many brilliant successes, such as the acquiring of Khrushchev's first de-Stalinisation speech, for the C.I.A. hates publicity, and while it cannot escape the spotlight when it performs badly on the world stage, it can at least disavow its successes.

However, some facts about the extent of the C.I.A. and its sister espionage organisations' power are at last being revealed. In a recent book, "The Invisible Government" by American authors David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, these facts are marshalled to show that "There are two governments in the United States today. One is visible. The other invisible . . . This second, invisible government gathers intelligence, conducts espionage, and plans and executes secret operations all over the globe."

How will Admiral Raborn handle this vast assignment? In many ways the Admiral, who retired in 1963 to take a directorship in a Californian aero-engineering firm, is the antithesis of his predecessors, McCone and Allan Dulles.

Dulles is patrician of manner, more British than the British, polished, academic and, of course, a career "spook," as Americans call their spies.

McCone is not dissimilar — a wealthy West Coast banker, he is the model international big businessman.

Raborn's qualities are more homespun. He fits into the era of the Texas takeover in Washington. He was, indeed, born in Texas 59 years ago—and his wife is Texan. But in point of fact he has spent most of his life elsewhere and he has not been a really intimate friend of the Johnsons for years, as some gossips now pretend. But being a Texan clearly helps a man's career these days.

It also happens that Admiral Raborn is a loyal Democrat and was a prominent booster of the Johnson-Humphrey ticket during the presidential election campaign last year.

This undoubtedly further commended him to the White House as the right candidate for one of the most sensitive jobs in Washington.

He has been furnished with an extremely able number two in



ADMIRAL RABORN
Spook from Texas

Richard Helms, a C.I.A. veteran ever since his wartime spying days, whom many in the agency had expected would be picked as McCone's successor.

This suggests there will be no sweeping changes of personnel on the Admiral's moving in, but rather an attempt to iron out problems created over the years by the development of inter-necine rivalry between the C.I.A. and the Pentagon's assorted intelligence organisations.

It is not generally known, but Mr. McNamara and Mr. McCone never hit it off well together. The Defence Secretary naturally tended to favour his department's National Security Agency and Defence Intelligence Agency.

With Admiral Raborn, a McNamara man, at the wheel in the C.I.A., a streamlining of the three branches of the American spy trade, ending unnecessary duplication, seems to be in the wind.

It also means that Mr. McNamara is a bigger man in the Johnson Cabinet than ever, which says a lot.

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